

**Remarks of Lt. Governor Becky Skillman at the  
Hoosier Rising Star Award Presentation  
May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010**

Thank you, Principal Smyth, it's great to be here today. I know we're very close to summer vacation, and it's just about time for the end-of-the-year awards and recognitions. I hope there are a lot of you who have earned perfect attendance and good grades. That makes your parents and teachers so proud – and it sets a wonderful example for your friends at school.

It means a lot to set an example for others. And I'm here today because one of your classmates has set an example for all Hoosiers – and especially young Hoosiers – and proved that one person can make a difference.

Just because you're young doesn't mean you can't have a lasting impact on your community. I've met quite a few young Hoosiers who are passionate about their projects and motivated to see them succeed. And I think they deserve some recognition for what they're doing.

That's why I created the Hoosier Rising Star Award. So we can throw the spotlight on kids who are getting engaged in their communities and making a difference.

We received a lot of very impressive applications. This year's award winners stood out from the crowd and one in particular caught my attention.

The average 14-year-old girl doesn't usually list public speaking as a hobby. She doesn't spend her free time pursuing relationships with leaders who can help her cause. She isn't working to educate her friends and neighbors or creating Facebook pages to support awareness of the things she's passionate about. And she isn't an outspoken advocate for the agriculture industry.

But Madison Dobbins is not an average 14-year-old girl. She is an outstanding young woman who has used her knowledge and passion for Indiana's agriculture industry to effect positive change in her community.

Madison recognized a problem and saw a way she could help solve it. It's a problem even the top leaders in the agriculture world have been working on - a common misconception that modern agriculture is somehow bad for animals. But Madison took it upon herself to speak up for our farmers, to give agriculture a voice in her community. She's worked hard to educate others about animal care in the agriculture industry and to educate legislators about some of the challenges the industry is facing from animal rights groups.

She's spoken to a long list of community groups and organized a legislative show at this year's Kosciusko County Fair. Her show will pair legislators with beef

exhibitors and they'll see for themselves the kind of attention and care animals receive.

At a time when most people's knowledge of the agriculture industry only goes as far as their local grocery store, we need people like Madison to help get out the good word about the industry. Her work to educate average citizens, leaders and legislators is timely and important.

That's why I'm so pleased to honor Madison today with a Hoosier Rising Star Award.

Madison, your passion for agriculture and your determination to defend it is extraordinary. It's rare for a person your age to take up a public policy issue and work so hard to protect the livelihood of thousands of people. Thank you so much for all you are doing for your community and for Indiana.